



**Testimony of the Connecticut Association of Not-for-profit
Providers For the Aging**

Submitted to the Committee on Public Health

In support of the concepts proposed in

**House Bill 6838, An Act Concerning the Use of Telemedicine to Promote
Efficiency in the Delivery of Health Care Services**

House Bill 6839, An Act Concerning Health Information Technology

House Bill 6976, An Act Concerning Chronic Care Management

January 31, 2007

CANPFA members serve thousands of people every day through mission-driven, not-for-profit organizations dedicated to providing the services people need, when they need them, in the place they call home. Our members offer the continuum of aging services: assisted living residences, continuing care retirement communities, residential care homes, nursing homes, home and community based services, and senior housing.

The Connecticut Association of Not-for-profit Providers (CANPFA) strongly supports the efforts of the Committee on Public Health to move the state forward in the area of health care technology. It is a national priority of our affiliate organization, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA) and their Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST), to lead the national charge to develop and deploy technologies that can improve the aging experience in America. This includes technologies to manage health care information as well as technologies to improve the management of personal health care needs.

New technology solutions offer great promise to improve the quality of care while reducing healthcare costs. Technology already has transformed our lives – from email to handhelds and from electronic commerce to cell phones. It is time now for technology to transform the experience of aging. And equally as important, technological solutions need to be integrated into people's daily lives. As important as high-tech hospitals, we need technology in the home that allows citizens to confer with their medical professional or voluntarily share data on a real-time, continuous basis, rather than once every six months at an office visit. In the future small changes in regular movements –which can be picked up by sensors in a cane or keyboard—will identify early signs of Parkinson's disease. Sensors in a toothbrush will be able to analyze saliva and identify any vitamin, mineral and enzyme deficiency, along with current blood sugar levels.

Our current system is designed for treatment rather than prevention. Current healthcare policy – perhaps understandably – has been about case-by-case *problem solving* – dealing with limited resources and diverse and competing interest groups. The 21st century goal for senior healthcare should be about *solution seeking* – empowering consumers, lowering fixed costs and bringing together *all* healthcare actors into a consensus-reaching process on the future of healthcare policy.

This is why passage of this type of forward thinking legislation is so important. We need to develop state-wide policy to address critical healthcare issues with respect to technology and assistive health services. No one group can do it alone. But if we work together as a public/private partnership, we can find solutions and meet the challenge.

CANPFA respectfully requests that you include the long term care perspective in your discussions as you move these issues forward and we offer our assistance and resources to help bring that perspective.

We thank you for allowing us to comment on these bills and look forward to working with you.

Respectfully submitted,

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Internet Resource:

The Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST) video, "Imagine – The Future of Aging Services," can be viewed at http://www.agingtech.org/imagine_video.aspx. The brief video features industry experts describe how technologies can potentially improve health care, preserve independence and ensure quality of life for seniors.